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Identical letters dated 3 November 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to communicate to you the position of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on remarks included in the report of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) and the statements made by him to the media to the effect that the Lebanese authorities had informed him that weapons were still entering Lebanon clandestinely across the Syrian border.

In this connection, Syria affirms that the allegations contained in the report of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy and in his statements to the media concerning smuggling of weapons across the Syrian-Lebanese border are untrue.

During the recent visit of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to Damascus, President Bashar Al-Assad assured him that Syria had taken all the necessary measures to prevent smuggling of weapons across the border, including the deployment of an entire border guard division along the Syrian-Lebanese border to ensure more effective control.

Moreover, the Lebanese authorities have denied the allegations made by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, a denial that has come from a number of officials, as follows:

- On 1 November 2006, Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora denied before Parliament that the Lebanese Government had reported to Mr. Roed-Larsen activities involving the smuggling of weapons into Lebanon across the border with Syria. He added that he would follow up on the matter in order to ascertain how the subject had slipped into Mr. Roed-Larsen's report and then appeared in his statements following a meeting before the Security Council;
- Lebanese Minister for Foreign Affairs Fawzi Salloukh denied in a statement made by him that the Lebanese Government had informed Mr. Roed-Larsen of weapons smuggling, adding that the absence of smuggling was a fact that had been confirmed by the Lebanese Army Command;
- Lebanese Minister of Defence Elias Murr stated that what Mr. Roed-Larsen had said, citing Lebanese officials, was devoid of truth;

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– A high-level Lebanese military source stated that there was no truth to the statements made by Mr. Roed-Larsen and that whenever smuggled weapons were found, the Command would issue a statement to that effect.

The Syrian Arab Republic, expressing its extreme regret over the inclusion of untrue allegations in the report of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy and in his statements to the media, requests the Secretary-General to draw the attention of his special envoys to the need to strive for accuracy and truth in statements made by them regarding matters of extreme political sensitivity, in order to uphold the credibility and impartiality of the Secretariat. We should like to point out in this connection that Israel has exploited the allegations of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy in an attempt to justify its violation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), a violation that continues to this moment and has been documented by the United Nations.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative